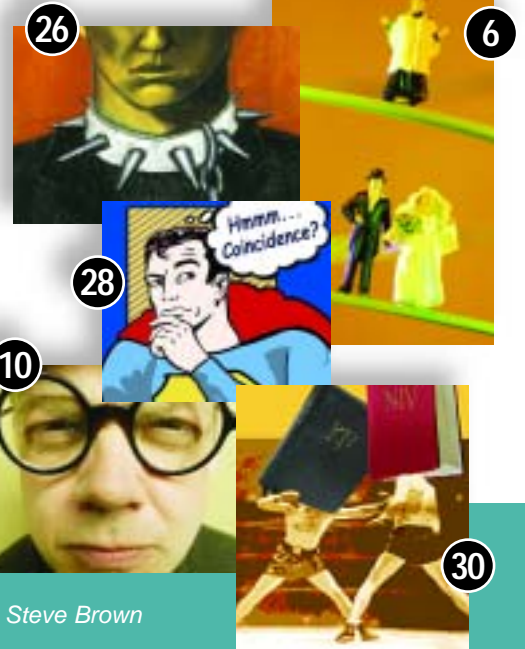


CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

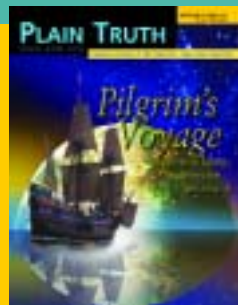
Features

- 6** Religion Can Hurt Your Marriage *The threat of legalism in relationships.*
- 10** Hope for the Terminally Judgmental *Learning about mercy the hard way.*
- 23** Getting My Former Church Out of Me *Freedom from years of religious control.*
- 26** Predator Priests *Our author asks: "Why is this happening in my church?"*
- 28** The Super Man *Saviors...sent to earth from above.*
- 30** Battle of the Bibles *Is the King James Version the "one, true" Bible?*



Departments

- 3** Letters
- 13** Commentary *Greg Albrecht*
- 21** He Asked Me to Remind You *Steve Brown*
- 31** Growing Places *Susan Reedy*



16

Cover Story

After being rescued from a life of darkness, Pilgrim strives to bring others into the Light on this allegorical voyage of transformation, hope and renewal.

COVER IMAGE BY MARV WEGNER—PTM

About This Issue

One of the most effective and entertaining ways to teach the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ is with a story. Many of the profound truths of our Christian faith are communicated via the parables of Jesus. Our cover article, "Pilgrim's Voyage," follows the literary form of a parable utilizing a fictional story based on the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome Christopher Lee to our pages with an account of his own religious journey to Christ and his struggles with religious legalism along the way.

This issue is filled with writers who have lived the stories they communicate, whether related in a fictional story form as with our cover story or as a factual account of religious hard knocks, as disclosed by Dena Brehm in "Getting My Former Church Out of Me." Mrs. Brehm is another newcomer to the pages of *Plain Truth*, as is Kay O'Bryan, with her powerful critique, "Predator Priests—Why Is This Happening in My Church?"

In this issue we offer many other challenging and provocative articles, including two on the subject of marriage which I must call to your attention. Both authors are no strangers to our regular readers. Both authors examine the toxic impact of legalism and the destruction it can cause within marital relationships. Ron Benson warns "Caution: Religion Can Hurt Your Marriage," and Don Otis offers "Hope for the Terminally Judgmental."

We pray our pages will edify, encourage and enlighten you in the "grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). As always, be sure to tell us what you think about any or all of our articles or for that matter our ministry at large. Call us, email or write to us. Our mission is to serve you with Christ-centered teaching, based on God's amazing grace.

—Greg Albrecht, Editor-in-chief

MISSION STATEMENT

Plain Truth Ministries proclaims authentic Christianity without the religion. We:

- Center our teaching on Jesus Christ and God's amazing grace
- Give hope to those burned out by religion
- Warn about and describe religious devices and detours, potholes and pitfalls that can lead us away from God
- Combat the deadly virus of legalism
- Base our ministry upon the essential, main and plain core teachings of historic Christianity

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

For a subscription in the U.S.A. or Canada, call toll free 1-800-309-4466, or visit our website www.ptm.org. Single copies or back issues: U.S.\$4.

Subscriptions outside of U.S.A. and Canada are U.S.\$29.95 a year; credit card orders only.

TO UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS

Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in your address by calling us at 1-800-309-4466, visiting our website at www.ptm.org/change (please have your old mailing label available for reference) or writing us at *The Plain Truth*, Pasadena, CA 91129 (please include your old mailing label and your new address). U.S. Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Plain Truth*, Pasadena, CA 91129.

TO SEND A LETTER OR E-MAIL

Write us at Letters to the Editor, *The Plain Truth*, Pasadena, CA 91129, email us at managing.editor@ptm.org or fax us at Letters to the Editor at 626-358-4846.

The editors reserve the right to print or not print comments so addressed, in whole or in part, as deemed in the public interest, and to print your name and edit the letter for clarity and space. We will protect the confidentiality of correspondence that we deem to be of a personal nature. Correspondence published by Plain Truth Ministries does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Plain Truth Ministries.

ADVERTISING

Please direct inquiries about advertising rates to Skip Dunn; Phone: 626-298-8013; Fax: 626-358-4846. Advertising in *The Plain Truth* does not imply editorial endorsement or agreement with the beliefs and teachings of Plain Truth Ministries.

EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Greg R. Albrecht
MANAGING EDITOR: Monte Wolverton
ART DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION: Marv Wegner
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Laura Ursta
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR: Skip Dunn



Plugging Headlines Into the Bible

You talk about grace a lot. But your attacks are vicious and ungracious toward Christians of a dispensational/premillennial understanding of Scripture [July/August 2006 cover]. We can come to different conclusions without being vicious.

**Lawrence
Illinois**

• *It is true that our articles about this subject are passionate. Having been there ourselves, we are all too aware of the destructive nature of dispensational theology. We believe it's another form of religious legalism—a deep, dark chasm, with victims mired at the bottom. When we see leaders (however well-intentioned) goading thousands of people into that chasm, and we shout for them to stop—are we being “vicious”? When we try to help others escape from the chasm, are we being “ungracious”? We would be ungracious, uncaring and hypocritical if we did nothing.*

I appreciate your article written to expose dispensationalism. The pre-tribulation Rapture (and all that comes with it) is a false teaching that was devised only a couple hundred years ago and is now the popular belief among most professing Christians. Thanks for having the guts to call it like it is. Please continue to do so in every area of life and doctrine.

**Matt
Ohio**

Thanks for your insightful revelation about Christian Zionism. I have ordered Stephen Sizer's book from you, and I've read Greg Albrecht's *Revelation Revolution*.

New York



Wayward Christian Soldiers

In the July/August 2006 *Plain Truth*, Charles Marsh, an Episcopal priest

and university professor had an article entitled “Wayward Christian Soldiers.” Is it true that Charles Marsh, while serving as an Episcopal priest at Baltimore's Cathedral of the Incarnation, supported the ordination of homosexual and lesbian priests? If that is true, how do his own words in the article critique his own position?

“What will it take for evangelicals in the United States to recognize our mistaken loyalty?... The Hebrew prophets might call us to repentance, but repentance is a tough demand for a people utterly convinced of their righteousness” (page 9).

I realize his topic in the article was attacking evangelical endorsement of U.S. military involvement in Iraq. Wouldn't his position on the ordination of homosexual and lesbian priests, if true, leave him open to the same critical commentary? Especially in light of the scandal and stain on the credibility of the church by Catholic priests' abuse of children?

Pennsylvania

• *If Charles Marsh takes the position you report, we do not support or agree with him in that particular position, as the many free resources we offer addressing homosexuality testify to. Neither does the PT necessarily endorse everything our authors might advocate.*

In this issue you may be interested to read “Predator Priests: Why Is This Happening in My Church?” The author is a law enforcement professional who is expressing outrage about the treatment of this issue in her own church. She makes an important distinction—the abuse of children by Catholic priests has been and is best described as pedophilia. Some pedophiles are heterosexual, some are homosexual—therefore the problem is not necessarily “solved” by purging homosexuals from the Catholic priesthood.



Breaking the Ten Commandments

I was a member of a Ten-Commandment keeping church for 28 years. I really enjoyed the July/August article by Glen Moyer. I wholeheartedly agree. Jesus wants mercy, not sacrifice. The author's

situation with his dad reminded me of the Pharisees' condemnation of Jesus for healing a man's withered hand on the Sabbath. They didn't care about the relationship and the mercy...only rules. But even in the old covenant, the mercy seat was above the law.

**Harold
Kentucky**

I just finished reading Glen Moyer's article "Breaking the Ten Commandments" in the July/August *Plain Truth* and felt the need to send this note. My father was diagnosed with lung/throat cancer the day before Thanksgiving, 1995 and died on Monday, March 11, 1996. My father liked the Dallas Cowboys and, in January 1996, they played in Super Bowl XXX. Some friends had invited my husband and me to their house to watch the game, and we agreed to go—instead of watching the game with my father. Every year, when I watch the Super Bowl, the same thought pops up, "I wish I'd watched that last Super Bowl with Dad." So, it made me happy to read that Mr. Moyer followed his heart and watched the Super Bowl with his father, during his father's last days. Thanks for this article—God continues to show me what his grace is about.

**Gina
Texas**

I just finished reading "Breaking the Ten Commandments." I hope many people read it, because it sure is good—to the point—what most people need to hear. God bless you—your heart is right!

**Nadine
Washington**

I am a pastor in Southern California, and I have just finished reading Glen Moyer's fine article in the July/August *PT*, "Breaking the Ten Commandments." I am glad to see that there are others who realize that the Ten Commandments are not the bedrock of the New Covenant.

**Richard
California**



Living in an Amish Paradise?

My wife and I read the May/June 2006 cover story by Greg Albrecht, and we were struck by the similarity of thought that supports their brand of legalism with the brand we turned away from eleven

years ago. Imprisoned by legalism, we couldn't see that our church culture was as visible and obvious to non-members as the Amish culture is to non-Amish. We couldn't see it until we turned to Jesus, admitting that we were blind and helpless. He graciously removed the veil that covered our faces. God bless your ministry.

**Ken
California**



Christianity Without the Religion

I enjoy attending your worship services online. I do not go to a brick-and-mortar church often because of distance, and your online services give me the spiritual understanding I need.

Newfoundland, Canada

Please tell Pastor Greg how blessed I've been from your online church services. I'm a single mom working two jobs, and many times I can't make it to church because of my work schedule. Your ministry has set me free. I'm telling my friends and family about you.

**Shantaya
Georgia**

My wife and I want you to know that PTM is an ongoing blessing to us. The spiritual food we receive from *Plain Truth* magazine and now the recent online worship services is greatly valued. We thank you for your efforts and labors on behalf of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We especially appreciate PTM's concept of "Christianity Without the Religion." PTM is an important part of our Christian lives, and we wish to thank you and your staff for helping to "feed the flock." It is our intention to continue supporting PTM financially and prayerfully. We think it is an honor to be able to help in such a wonderful ministry.

Mississippi

From a New Reader

I am a new *Plain Truth* subscriber. After a friend told me about your website, I went to your website and signed up for your weekly eUpdate. I have been pleasantly surprised. You address topics that I have been thinking about, wondering about or going through. This magazine is just what I need, as the head of our home, for us to read and learn from.

Ohio

COPYRIGHT & POSTAL INFORMATION

The Plain Truth is published bimonthly by Plain Truth Ministries, Pasadena, CA 91129. Copyright © 2006 Plain Truth Ministries. Printed in U.S.A. All rights reserved. Standard flats postage paid at Pasadena, CA, and at additional mailing offices. Volume 71, Number 5: September/October 2006. Unless noted otherwise, scriptures are quoted from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. *The Plain Truth* is a trademark and may be licensed for use internationally.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

Worship with us, 24/7, at our church without walls, a church without the religion. A relevant, timely, Christ-centered worship service is available right now at www.ptm.org.

OUR WEBSITE

Visit our website at www.ptm.org to browse *Plain Truth* archives for past articles, to find out more about Plain Truth Ministries and our other products, to subscribe and to update your address.

SUBMISSIONS

The Plain Truth rarely publishes unsolicited manuscripts. Please review our writers guidelines at our website (www.ptm.org) before submitting queries. Include SASE with query. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited artwork, photographs or manuscripts.

PLAIN TRUTH MINISTRIES

The Plain Truth is published by Plain Truth Ministries. If you are interested in learning more about Plain Truth Ministries, please request a copy of our monthly Plain Truth Ministry Letter by calling us at 1-800-309-4466, visiting our website at www.ptm.org (please have your mailing label available for reference) or writing us at Plain Truth Ministries, Pasadena, CA 91129.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Plain Truth Ministries gratefully accepts tax deductible contributions to further the ongoing work of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. We accept contributions in U.S. funds by check or credit card. Call us at 1-800-309-4466, or write us at Plain Truth Ministries, Pasadena, CA 91129.

MEMBER  EVANGELICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION


PLAIN TRUTH
MINISTRIES

MEMBER
NRB